535 /38/ To tell the truth, however, the Mossi do not know how to dance. With the exception of the circumcision dance and of some villages of dancers where people devote themselves methodically to choreography, the greater part of the population do not know how to dance gracefully. This does not prevent them, one and all, from indulging in the dance. Men and women dance separately. The most common male dance consists of a rapid motion of the upper part of the body, from left to right and right to left; the feet do not leave the ground, and they are moved forward very slowly. The arms are bent up to shoulder height and away from the body; the fingers are extended, and arms and hands shake along with the rest of the body. When performed by professionals, who are sometimes found in the villages, this motion is rather graceful but lacks breadth of style.

[292] The dancers wear a cardboard headpiece, its crest adorned with a band of cowries and its sides often embellished with bits of mirror fragments, feathers, and all sorts of small, gaudy articles. The upper part of the body is covered with a tight, wide-meshed garment, decorated at the waist with pompons or cowries and small bells. The dancer wears [301] on the middle finger a piece of iron which looks like a large clam shell, and on his thumb an iron ring. He strikes one against the other in rhythm. His wrist is often adorned with a bracelet made of several of these iron shells; hanging from them are small strips of the same metal which clang at the slightest motion. Those who do not have a costume deck themselves out in tawdry finery.

The women dance two at a time, each by herself, spinning around and assuming whatever poses they consider most graceful. When they come near one another, they turn around and strike their backs together; then one of the two withdraws, and another takes her place. All the while, the women spectators clap their hands in rhythm and sing. Sometimes one of them utters a shrill cry to arouse the dancers or to laud one who has proved unusually graceful and lithe.

[831] There are no special dances for the dead, and Mossi dances apparently do not have the obscenity of some Negro dances.

857 But to return to the children. It may be stated, as a general rule, that children can do as they please as long as they help out with everyday tasks, as long as the son helps his father and the daughter her mother. Happily there are exceptions to this, and some parents watch their children quite closely, but these are exceptions. Boys 593 prefer their mother to their father, because the latter must often

152 their family, they love it very much, but they love their husband just as much if they love him at all. If they do not love their husband, naturally they love their family infinitely more.

304 833 When we study the children's life, we shall see that Mossi girls are excised at the age of nine or ten. This barbarous operation naturally removes an important part of a woman's sensual sensitiveness. The Negress is thus a generatrix rather than a lover. One cannot say of her as of the Latin poet's mistress: crispum ... docta movere latus /gracefully moving her slender body/. She is passive in love and content to give herself without resistance to the man's passion.

831 577 The morality of Mossi women is certainly laxer than that of European women. (Naturally, I compare the Mossi woman to the respectable woman of our occidental societies.) We saw earlier that the breach of virginity prior to marriage was not unusual and was tolerated with considerable leniency by custom. Adultery is also frequent and is punished in crude and rustic fashion. The woman is beaten and then forgiven. In short, morals are certainly less rigid than in our own countries. On the other hand, prostitution does not exist, and this is a great moral advantage. Briefly, the division of labor in the sexual domain, as in other domains, is far less developed among the Mossi of Yatenga than among the highly evolved civilizations of our European and occidental countries. The same applies to the other Sudanese populations.

000 Now we turn to Children and Education. We shall discuss these matters in the following order. /250/

1. Filiation.
2. Theory of birth.
3. How children are welcomed.
4. Abortion.
5. Childbirth.
6. Baptism.
7. Freaks. Twins.
8. Nursing.
9. Charms for children and tattooings.
10. Children's games.
11. Familial education.
12. Education of children among themselves. Societies.
13. Young people's tasks.
14. Rights and duties of parents toward their children.
15. Duties of children toward their parents.